

Jesus makes breakfast

I want to share with you a way of reading Scripture that we touched upon last Sunday at our monthly liturgy talk. It's a way of reading Scripture that is so much more than "reading". As in the case of Alice in her story, we can step *into* today's Gospel as into a looking glass that's oddly penetrable – and *experience* this episode even as the disciples do. In other words – *within* the context of the story – imagine the details happening to *you* – yet in your own way and words.

For instance I can imagine myself fishing for the meaning of life and after so many years coming up empty – until upon a shoreline a figure appears who asks if I have caught anything. And I show him my empty net and say, not much – perhaps a lot of seaweed. And the man (the risen Christ) on the shore says maybe I have been fishing in the shallower waters of this world, much of the Internet, the fleeting news of the day, the trivia of what often passes for scholarship.

So he encourages me to cast my net into deeper water, things of more serious importance. And so I try again, cast my net into my heritage of Scripture and literature, sources teeming with truth about the meaning of life and of my world in general – and find my net breaking and soon I myself breaking my fast at a Eucharist at which I dine on grace, learn how to love and live more profoundly forever more.

But why explain how to imagine this event happening to you when Carol Penner, a Canadian Mennonite theologian shares her way of *experiencing* the text so beautifully in her poem:

Jesus makes breakfast: a poem about John 21:1-14

I could smell that charcoal fire a long way off, / while we were still rowing far from shore. / As we got closer I could smell the fish cooking, / I imagined I could hear it sizzling. / When you're hungry, your mind works that way.

When the man by the fire asked us about our catch, / we held up the empty nets. / And his advice to throw the nets in once more / is something we might have ignored, / except for the smell of cooking fish... / this guy must know something about catching fish!

The catch took our breath away; / never in my life have we pulled so many in one heave. / I was concentrating on the catch, / but John wasn't even paying attention, / he was staring at the shore / as if his life depended on it. / Then he clutched my shoulder, crying / "It is the Lord!"

Suddenly, everything came into focus, / the man, the catch, the voice; / and nothing could stop me, / I had to be with the Master. // There were no words at breakfast, / beyond, "Pass the fish," / or "I'll have a bit more bread." / We sat there, eating our fill, / basking in the sunrise. / We didn't have to say anything. / Jesus just smiled and served.

Why not allow your own imagination to do something of the same?

Geoff Wood